Mr. Hammerstein's Last Operatic Achievements

Singers Counted for Less Than the Opera's Exclusiveness — Many Novelties Are Presented

By H. E. KREHBIEL

Chapter IX

THE last novelty heard in New York in the season of 1908-'09 was "La Princesse d'Auberge," which Mr. Hammerstein brought forward on March 10, 1909. The opera, which was sung in French, was originally written in Flemish, and its authors, Nestor de Tiére and Jan Block (who died in 1912), were enthusiastic Flammands who strove to keep alive a native expression among their countrymen in the Netherlands. They did not find it an easy task, for besides Flemish the inhabitants of what once was Flanders speak French, Walloon and Dutch. French art has long pervaded the culture of the country, but the Teutonism of the Flammands is strong and continues to be in rebellion, though peacefully, with southern ideals — peacefully, yet puissantly enough to preserve many idioms as well as customs and manners. It is possible for a student of folk music who is keen on the scent of racial and popular idioms to find Flemish traces in opera, though it is necessary that his curiosity be piqued and his perceptions sharpened in advance by the discovery that the music does not sound French. Some ten years before this American production the opera had been performed at the Flemish Theatre in Antwerp, in a few cities of Holland and afterward (in French) in Brussels; but its success was local and no greater than that of scores of contemporaneous French, German and Italian operas which promptly found their way into the limbo of forgotten things.

In the search for attributes which promise to bring success works which contain national traits are now receiving unusual attention from managers, and to this tendency the great world war will doubtless give a new impetus. Picturesqueness of scene and attractiveness of musical color frequently atone for lack of depth and beauty of musical thought or melodic invention. New York has been privileged to enjoy much opera of this character in recent years; witness the Japanese pictures and music of "Iris" and "Madama Butterfly," the Russian of "Siberia," "Boris Godounow" and "Prince Igor," the mixed Polish and gypsy of Mr. Paderewski's "Manru," the Spanish of "Carmen," "La Navarraise" and "Goyescas," the Italian of "Pagliacci," "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "A Bassa Porto."

"La Princesse d'Auberge," following the dramatic lines of the three operas last mentioned, deals with a story of Belgian low life. It tells of the moral and physical ruin wrought in a man of fine intellectual fibre by association with vicious and vulgar companions and surrender to debasing appetites. Retribution comes through crime instigated by jealous passion. The cause of the moral devastation and the physical suffering which overwhelm the sweet and innocent with the base and guilty is a wanton who traffics with her charms to promote the business of a dissolute innkeeper. Incidental to the exposition of the story there is an opulent procession of scenes from the life of Brussels, a city famous for its roistering gayety whenever occasion invites its populace into its beautiful public places and streets. The story might be located anywhere in civilized Christendom and its people found there. Not so the scenes. An excellent and characteristic environment for the play had been provided. There are four stage settings and every one of them was sumptuous and historically and technically correct. These pictures might, of course, be introduced in an opera with French, German or Italian investiture. But they become doubly effective when viewed through the atmosphere created by Flemish music. This music is recognized first of all, perhaps, in the large admixture of bell chimes in all the concerted pieces which inspire the popular scenes. When Dr. Burney in his memorable tour through Europe reached Antwerp he descanted first of all on the passion for carillons prevalent in the Netherlands. When he got to Amsterdam he lamented the lack of all music except "the jingling of bells and ducats." The audience on this occasion was entertained by similar sounds. It was only in the dialogue and the dramatic songs that the ear was not saluted by the imitation of bell-chimes from the orchestra.

Musical Nationalism in the Choruses

In the last act national idioms again had expression in the direct and literal quotation of a Flemish song (written by Prudens van Duyse), which must have amused the hunters of melodic parallels. It is a splendid specimen of tune written in the simple folksong manner, but in its first period there is a strong resemblance to the famous political song of the Netherlands "Wilhelmus von Nassauen," and in the second to an American Sunday school hymn ("I'm a Pilgrim"), a parody of which has long afforded amusement to college students in this country. Musical nationalism was discernible to the more sophisticated minds also in most of the choruses, in which the opera is singularly rich. Though they moved in dance rhythms there was a sturdiness in their melody which published a Teutonic rather than the Gallic spirit. Also a soundness coupled with elaborateness of structure not ordinarily found in French operas. The composer makes use of Wagner's system of typical phrases and the orchestration is frequently brilliant.

When Mr. Hammerstein issued his prospectus for 1909-'10, which proved to be his last season as an operatic impresario, his plans were not fully or accurately formulated. Even the date of the opening was changed afterward from November 15 to November 8; but this was for the purpose of taking advantage of the annual fashionable gathering for the horse show. He, however, promised twenty weeks, and though ruin was staring him in the face long before the expiration of the term, he kept his promise to the letter. He published no official list of singers, but laid stress upon his list of operas, putting forth the boast that "in the matter of exclusive rights of operas" he stood "unique among impresarios and directors of opera houses in the world."

So far as French operas and the United States were concerned, the claim was no doubt justified. The Metropolitan Opera Company had been permitted to become impotent in this department and though in its prospectus for the same season it proclaimed the exclusive ownership of nine French operas only two of them have seen the stage lights at the Metropolitan. Three of the nine were said to be operas by Claude Debussy, and though they were permitted to figure in the announcements of Mr. Gatti down to the end of the period with which I am particularly concerned, they were little more than flocculent dreams when the composer died on March 26, 1918. Of the operas for which he claimed the sole right of representation in America Mr. Hammerstein said they were "the masterpieces of living composers," though Offenbach, who composed "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," had long been dead.

He Scorns "the One-Man Conductor System"

But that is unessential. "The novelties claimed by another institution," he said, were operas which he had rejected. Obviously, he was in a bellicose mood. He had acquired his novelties not by excessive expenditures, he said, but by reason of "the confidence possessed by authors and composers in the abilities of Mr. Hammerstein to properly present their works." These novelties were Richard Strauss's "Elektra" and "Feuersnoth," Massénet's "Hérodiade," "Grisélidis," "Sapho" and "Cendrillon," Leoncavallo's "Zaza" and Victor Herbert's "Natoma" and "The Violin Maker of Cremona." The performing rights of "Elektra" he had procured in Berlin three months before the first performance of the opera in Dresden, on January 25, 1909. A cabled report concerning that *première* stated that he had secured the American rights for $5,000 cash and a guaranteed royalty of $18,000 for thirty performances, in addition to $6,000 for the right of reproducing the music—a phrase which I cannot interpret. Nearly $1,000 a night may not have appeared to be an excessive fee to Herr Strauss when that gentleman looked upon the world as his oyster, but to enable Mr. Hammerstein to pay it New York would have had to be a worse operatic bedlam than it was; and that it was bedlamite enough I have tried to show. Deferring the announcement of the full list of singers engaged, he reported the re-engagement of Mary Garden, Luisa Tetrazzini, Mme. Gerville-Réache, August Doria, Emma Trentini, Lina Cavalieri, Charles Dalmores, Maurice Renaud, Hector Dufranne, Charles Gilibert, Giovanni Zenatello, Mario Sammarco, Florencio Constantino, Armand Crabbe and Giovanni Polesi. The engagement of John McCormack had been announced on January 4. His former musical director, Cleofonte Campanini, having departed from him, he informed the public that he had relegated "the one-man conductor" system to the past and engaged six conductors, De la Fuente, Anselmi, Sturani, Cartier, Charlier and Scognamiglio.

Before beginning his regular subscription performances Mr. Hammerstein opened the Manhattan Opera House for a season of "educational opera," as he called it at first, which began on August 30 and endured until October 30. In this preliminary season he not only made trial of a considerable number of singers, some of whom remained with him throughout the regular season, but also experimented with operas, some of which went over into the subscription repertory without any material change either in casts or stage settings; while others, notably "Le Prophète" and "La Juive," might well have done so. In them some singers of excellence were heard, such as William Beck, Marguerite Sylva and Zerola—the last a tenor whom he had recruited from an Italian company which began a summer season at the Academy of Music and made the customary shipwreck. After the season got under way, however, these singers were heard from chiefly in the newspapers in connection with the disaffections and disagreements between them and the rival managers, Mr. Hammerstein and Signor Ferrara. There was downright value in the experiment not only as a test of the inextinguishable notion that the public is clamorous for opera at low prices, but also as a means of giving singers with operatic aspirations the routine which is denied them at large houses in fashionable seasons.

In the season proper Mr. Hammerstein tried to give *opéra comique* (as he politely termed it though it was largely *opéra bouffe*) on Saturday evenings; but the experiment proving a failure, he admitted the fact like a brave man and abandoned it, substituting for it grand opera at popular prices. He came creditably near to keeping his promises in respect of novelties. He had said that "Hérodiade," "Elektra," "Grisélidis" and "Sapho" would be among his new productions, and they were; he had also said that "Cendrillon," "Feuersnoth," "Natoma" and "The Violin Maker of Cremona" would be given, and they were not. The sensational feature of the season was the production of "Elektra," which had seven performances, the first on a special night with prices raised to $10 for the most expensive stalls and $2.50 for the least. The receipts at the "première" amounted to $19,117.50, according to Mr. Hammerstein's figures, and the excitement was intense. There was another extra performance on the afternoon of Washington's Birthday and five representations in the subscription. Between the first performance, on February 1, and its last, on March 5, the opera served its purpose and lived out its welcome. The season ended on March 26. Had it lasted any longer I fancy that "Salome," which was at once revived, would have proved the more popular work of the two, although its novelty was worn off. Of the French operas "Thaïs" and "Les Contes d'Hoffmann" disclosed the most enduring qualities. "Sapho" was distinctly a failure, receiving only three performances, and so was "Grisélidis," although Miss Garden appeared in both of them.

Salomes of Contrasting Character

If one Salome could move the pool so pleasantly for an operatic manager, what was more natural than that another should follow? Despite the agitation against the drama by Richard Strauss, which may have had some influence in the rapid collapse of interest in "Elektra" at a little later day, the composer's star was not in the descendant; nevertheless, Mr. Hammerstein seemed determined that that of Massénet should be kept in the ascendant. On November 8, 1909, he brought out "Hérodiade."

There are Salomes and Salomes, as poets, romancers and painters have amply demonstrated, though they are at one in skill in dancing and the purpose to which they apply it. The woman created for the music of Massénet by one Italian and two French opera-book makers has nothing else in common with the perverted creature of Wilde and Strauss. She is a love-sick damsel, sentimental and silly as a school girl, and at the last a penitent Magdalen. For a study of her and Massénet's work I must refer the reader to my "Second Book of Operas"; I cannot consume time and space with the subject here. It is entertaining, but not significant. Ten days after its production another opera by the same conductor was heard at the Manhattan Opera House for the first time in America. This was "Sapho." The date was November 18, 1909.

The rapidity with which Mr. Hammerstein was bringing his novelties forward threatened danger to some of the operas in his list, especially to those of M. Massénet. French music, as a rule, but especially that of M. Massénet, depends for its effectiveness on refinement in presentation above all else. It might have been better for "Sapho" if more time and greater care had been bestowed upon its preparation. Not that any less violence would have been done to it by the performer for whose sake it was put into Mr. Hammerstein's repertory, even if weeks and months instead of days had been devoted to study. Miss Garden never was an exponent of the principles for which M. Massénet stands, despite the fact that he has given musical investiture to several dramatic women whom she felt called upon to impersonate. Her appeals were rudely, vulgarly physical, whereas his are graceful, subtle and psychological.

"Elektra" was performed for the first time in America on February 1, 1910. In the mood then prevailing in the popular mind the incident was stupendously momentous—not a historical trifle like the battles of Leipsic, Waterloo and Bunker Hill, or the meeting of the barons at Runnymede. The lyric tragedy, indeed, was one of the sensations of the hour throughout the Occidental world (great is Reklamer and Strauss is its prophet!) and these chapters would be a vain thing if they did not tell when it was first produced in the United States, where it was produced, how it was produced, by whom it was performed and what effect it made upon its hearers. As incidentally contributory to the chronicle, a study of the work by a writer compelled by his duty to a newspaper to write down his impressions might be tolerated. The time, then, was February 1, 1910; the place, the Manhattan Opera House in New York; the language, French; the conductor, Henriques de la Fuente; the stage manager, Jacques Coini; the impresario, Oscar Hammerstein; the actors these:

Elektra	Marietta Mazarin
Chrysosthemis	Alice Baron
Klytemnestra	Mme. Gerville-Réache
Orestes	M. Huberdeau
Ægisthus	M. Duffault
Foster-father of Orestes	M. Nicolay
A Young Servant	Sig. Venturini
An Old Servant	Mr. Scott
The Confidante	Miss Desmond
Overseer of the Servants	Mlle. Taty-Lango
Trainbearer	Miss Johnstone
First Serving Woman	Alice Gentle
Second Serving Woman	Mlle. Severina
Third Serving Woman	Miss Milda
Fourth Serving Woman	Mme. Walter-Villa
Fifth Serving Woman	Mme. Duchene

I have already made record of the first performance of the work in Europe and the facts touching Mr. Hammerstein's acquisition of the right of performance in America. It was written as a spoken play by Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, a Viennese dramatist, and after Strauss had provided it with music a French translation was made by M. Gauthier-Villar. There was just such an audience in attendance on the first American performance as a sensational incident of the first magnitude might have been expected to summon. It could not have been larger; it could not have been more attentive; it could but amaze the observer who saw it sit for two hours while a tale of horror was unrolled before it and music dinned into its ears which lacked nearly every one of the elements supposed to be attractive to the ordinary lovers of the old opera or the modern lyric drama. The audience and the critical observer recognized one thing in common, which was that the man of operatic miracles, oppressed by difficulties greater than he had ever confronted before, fulfilled a promise which seemed beyond fulfilment. A German work which has affrighted the souls of managers and singers of the majority of German opera houses was performed by a company predominantly French, in a style which compelled the admission that its spirit in general had been grasped, that there were few deficiencies in details to deplore, and that in respect of the principal actor there had been a performance nothing short of marvellous. Little was the surprise of the knowing that Mme. Mazarin had suffered a physical collapse after she had accomplished an almost superhuman labor and was made to realize that she had been successful.

—*La Theatre et la Musique*

The measure of that success cannot be described even at this date. For two hours she was on the stage shrieking in the Straussian manner the emotions of Hoffmannsthal's maniacal Elektra, yet when a kind dispensation of the composer permitted her to sing, she sang, and always she freighted the imagination of the audience with the image of a tragic character unfathomably pathetic because of its offence against all that is good in art. Compared with her, all the rest of the performers were marionettes, not excepting the representative of Klytemnestra, who ought to have seemed dominant with her regal pose and attire.

Patient Grizel Done Into Opera

In discussing "Elektra" in this place I have departed from the chronological order of Mr. Hammerstein's production of novelties for no reason except to humor a notion that a less grewsome topic would make a fitter, or at least a more amiable, conclusion to this chapter. There remains for consideration one more novelty, Massenet's "Grisélidis," the third work by that composer contained in the season's list. It was performed for the first time on January 19, 1910.

This opera, like "Le Jongleur," is in sharp contrast with the somewhat lurid "Thaïs" and the romantic "Manon" and "Werther," in which there was more or less portrayal of domestic passion. So many operas by a single composer ought to speak well for the versatility of the composer, as it surely does of his industry and fecundity. M. Massénet's individuality is incontestable, but it leans heavily on sameness. The French wits who thought it clever to dub him "Mademoiselle Wagner" twenty-five or thirty years ago never had the opportunity to greet him as "Madame." The features of his art which were those most charming then remained the most charming to the end of his career. He did not grow older in thought or riper in creative ability, but only more facile and finished in expression. "Grisélidis" was the first product of an amiable pose which was continued in "Le Jongleur." It was once common gossip in Paris that Massénet composed "Le Jongleur" to answer the flings of the boulevardiers that his inspiration required the spur of Sibyl Sanderson's charms. "Grisélidis" had already disclosed the absurdity of the accusation. It preceded "Le Jongleur" and was as little adapted to the type which he had associated with Miss Sanderson as "Le Jongleur" was adapted to Miss Garden—or any other woman, for that matter. Both operas are, in fact, easily explained by the essentially sentimental spirit of French art when religion is concerned in it. Gounod's attempt to write an oratorio on so sublime a subject as the fall and redemption of man and Massenet's picture of the touching piety of an honest mountebank—it is all one; the music is bound to run out into a gentle strain of religious balladry. Except for César Franck's "Beatitudes" the basic type for French religious music is "There is a Green Hill Far Away."

French music is still ingenuous in its pursuit of beauty. It has not accepted inspiration from Ibsen. Oscar Wilde, to whom modern Germany points as the highest development of dramatic genius outside of its own country, had not yet appealed to the people for whom he wrote what his German admirers think a transcendent masterpiece. They would have none of Wilde's poem. Elektra's bestial ferocity as pictured by Hoffmannsthal found no more favor among the French than Salome's perverse passion did. Let thus much be said in favor of the artistic tendency of a people who were willing to hark back to a miracle tale like that of "The Juggler of Our Lady" and to a legend like that of "Grisélidis." Who, indeed, but a Frenchman would have thought of calling "the patient Grizel" back to life? That marvellous model of patience, humility, fidelity and wifely obedience! We thought that the lachrymal floodgates which the perusal of her sufferings kept open for three centuries or more had long ago been closed. And to present her with truly mediæval simplicity, without philosophic gloss inspired by modern thought in these days of female assertiveness—what daring!

Massénet's opera was a mystery before it was an opera. Its authors, Armand Sylvestre and Eugène Morand, produced the play at the Comédie Française on May 15, 1891. To make an opera out of it required little else than the prefixing of a prologue and the investiture of the lines with music. Thus changed, Massénet brought it out at the Opéra Comique on November 20, 1901. In the cast were two artists known to New York. M. Huberdeau, who appeared in the Devil's part in Hammerstein's production, was the original operatic Gondebeau, and Mlle. Breval, one of Mr. Grau's prima donnas at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1900-'01, was the Grisélidis. The opera differs in some particulars from the mediæval legend, but the story may first be told in its old form.

A Devil From the Roof of Notre Dame

The changes which the modern dramatizers of the Griselda story made seem to have had for their chief purpose the rehabilitation of the character of the marquis who for centuries has suffered denunciation as a cruel, tyrannical and abnormally suspicious husband. In the opera he is as uxorious a knight of the slipper as any window-storming suffragette could wish. It is not he who fears to trust his wife, but his friar, who is supposedly Grisélidis's father-confessor. It is not he who subjects her to trial and temptations, but the Devil, who, being a henpecked husband, has as sorry an opinion of womankind as has the friar for reasons which he does not divulge. In introducing this devil M. Massénet and his collaborator have been more naïvely mediæval than the creator of the familiar of Dr. Faustus. He is not Goethe's devil, who was so much of a gentleman that the only observable abnormality about him was his limping gait. He is not even the rather too gaudily dressed cavalier of Barbière Carré and Gounod. He is a devil from the roof of Nôtre Dame Cathedral called into life. His ostensible purpose in the opera is to accomplish the destruction of the innocent Grisélidis; the real object of his introduction is to bring a comic element into the play. And surely a devil who has a wife shrewish and clever enough to keep him in hot water is comical. He would have served his purpose without so much opera bouffe as M. Massenet burdened him with. He has horns and possibly hoofs, though he is lighter on his feet than Mephistopheles.

He lays a wager with the marquis that Grisélidis will play him false, just as Mephistopheles does with the Ancient that he will lead Faust astray, and Satan does with God that Job will not withstand his wiles. The marquis is guilty of no wrong, but only of the weakness which afflicted Posthumus Leonatus in Shakespeare's "Cymbeline" and Adolar in Weber's "Euryanthe." The Devil, having made a bet, tries to win it. He prevails upon his wife, Fiamina, to play the part of a slave to the marquis, who has gone off to the holy wars, and introduces her as mistress into the castle over which Grisélidis imagined that she reigned. Grisélidis remains mute and uncomplaining. He brings back her shepherd lover, Alain, who had poured his passion in an exquisite song in the prologue and had been most unaccountably thrown over in favor of the marquis at first sight; and though she wavers slightly she is held to a sense of her wifely duty by the sight of her child. In a rage at being cheated by maternal love the Devil steals the child and hides him away. Then the Devil in the disguise of a corsair attempts to persude Grisélidis to go down to the ship, whose pirate captain, he said, was enamoured of her, on the promise that there she should find her son. But the marquis returned from the Crusades, and when the Devil brings forth false witness against Grisélidis the good marquis refuses to believe him, and if he had suspicions they vanish when he sees his lovely wife. At the last the Devil (who had been aping Gounod's melodious fiend in other things) hides himself in a column and thence proclaims that the lost boy, Loys, is his. Then the loving parents kneel down before the shrine of St. Agnes, and as they pray the tryptich opens and there was their child unharmed. Happy parents! Asinine and discomfited Devil!

An Attempt at a French "Tannhäuser"

Mr. Hammerstein's plans for the season contained an anomalous feature growing out of his desire to make his scheme as comprehensive artistically as that of the rival establishment. As the international character of the operas performed at the Metropolitan Opera House had long been the boast of its operating company, and much of its success had been due to its German contingent, Mr. Hammerstein determined to include operas from the Wagnerian list in his repertory. He announced "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin" and "Die Meistersinger," but having no German singers in his company he was compelled to resort to French translations. A like exigency had forced the Metropolitan company to give "The Bartered Bride," a Bohemian opera, in German in the preceding season, and the same expedient was afterward followed with "Boris Godounowff," "Prince Igor" and "Pique Dame," Russian operas, which were sung in Italian, and "Iphigénie en Aulide," a French opera, which was sung in German, a proceeding exactly paralleled so far as the effect upon the work was concerned by Mr. Hammerstein's French "Tannhäuser."

Mr. Hammerstein was not only audacious in all his undertakings, he was also courageous in confessing his mistakes. Finding light French opera ineffective for his purposes, he abandoned it; after three performances of "Tannhäuser" he became convinced that the work was too German in spirit to prove acceptable in French, and he put it upon the shelf and made no effort to produce its companions. It was a manly act, for with manifold shortcomings the performances were yet indicative of a sincere striving for artistic good. So far as the general public was concerned I shall not undertake to estimate the extent to which the use of the French language militated against the success of the opera.

No doubt many more of Mr. Hammerstein's patrons understood German than understood French; no doubt those who understood German preferred operas which are German in subject and spirit sung in the German tongue; but it is much to be feared that the majority of operagoers in New York to-day are as blithely indifferent to the language used by the stage people as were the English people of Addison's day, when opera was half English and half Italian, or the Hamburg people of Handel's early day, when German recitatives and Italian arias alternated with each other in the same scene. Our population is composed of many elements, and the enjoyment of each element is unquestionably greater at a performance given in the language native to it than in any other tongue. But on the whole it has been made plain a thousand times that the general attitude is one of indifference to everything except the personality of the singers, their singing and the pictures by which they are surrounded.

Jean de Reszke and Opera Translations

The French were the first people, after the Italians had invented the form, to develop a style of operatic music based upon the genius of their language, though two of the composers who took part in the development were foreigners—Lully, an Italian, and Gluck, an Austrian. But the French have been quite as careless about preserving the spirit of foreign works in the translations which they have made for their own delectation as any other people. In this respect, indeed, all the nations meet on common ground. A case in point comes to mind: The lovers of Wagner's dramas are not likely soon to forget what Jean de Reszke did to restore them in their native tongue to the repertory of the Metropolitan Opera House. At the time when the public was crowding the house to enjoy his impersonation of Tristan I remarked to him that I would pay a handsome sum could I be present to witness the enthusiasm of the impressionable French people when he should sing the role at the Grand Opéra in Paris.

"I have already been asked by the director to sing it," said M. de Reszke, "and have said that I would do so provided he would give me a new text made under my supervision."

"You surprise me," I replied; "did not Catulle Mendès make a translation? Surely he knows French and German thoroughly."

"He did indeed, but"—turning to his valet—"bring me 'Tristan und Isolde' from the piano." He opened the book and turning to the page sang "Tristan's Ehre, höchte Treu," in German, and then "La gloire de Tristan," with the notes of "Ehre" on the last syllable of "Tristan." "What do you think of that? No, I'll not sing such stuff. I must make a literal translation note for note and then a poet may put it into lines."

A Sensational Production of "Elektra" Contributes to the Interest of the Final Season

The Regeneration of Palestine

THE prosperity of Palestine under British rule is pictured by the Cairo correspondent of the "London Times," who has just paid a visit to Jerusalem. He says:

"Fuel has been, and still is to a certain extent, a very serious problem in Palestine. Especially has the situation been acute in connection with the orange industry, which normally is one of the mainstays of the Jerusalem Sanjak. Most of the groves are watered from wells by means of pumps, all German it may be added, and all worked by oil fuel. There was a dearth of petroleum in the country and the industry was threatened with disaster.

"One of the first things we did was to arrange with Egypt for the immediate importation of sufficient oil to work these pumps, and our efforts have undoubtedly saved the situation, to judge by the flourishing condition of the orange and lemon groves all over the country.

"Most of the crop, however, is exported to Europe, with which communication is now difficult, if not impossible. Whilst, therefore, the crop was saved the growers were confronted with the problem of the disposal of their produce. Here the army came to the rescue. In many places it supplied wheeled transport to carry the fruit from the fields, and the export quantum has to a great extent been absorbed by the troops, who purchased in large quantities, and to whom an orange ration is now being issued.

"Steps are being taken to save and help in a similar manner other industries threatened with disaster. As soon as the critical agricultural and economic period has been traversed in Palestine—and daylight is even now making its appearance—the people will begin to reap the full financial benefit of the presence of the British forces, which are already spending large sums locally.

"It is, of course, impossible for the ordinary staff of an army in the field to deal with the vast detail involved by administrative and economic work, and a special organization, the Provisional Military Administration, is under the direction of Major General Sir Arthur Money and controls all the occupied territory in Palestine. It is under these auspices that the work already achieved has been done. Experts are busy investigating the agricultural situation, the fiscal question, the educational requirements, public security, including the prisons; the complicated question of judicial organization and pious foundations. Slowly but surely an organized administration is being built up, despite the lack of local officers and the difficulty of obtaining competent men from the outside. Already there is on every side abundant evidence of the fruits of this activity.

"Especially is that noticeable in a city like Jerusalem, where the normal life of the people has been entirely resumed, and where, except for the difficulty in obtaining domestic commodities, one would not know that a war is on. When we entered the city, in December, most of the shops were closed and it had a deserted appearance. To-day closed shops are more the exception than the rule. David's Street and the Jaffa Gate have resumed their crowded and picturesque appearance, and the shopkeepers are exposing for sale goods which were thought to be unobtainable, and which they have unearthed from the places where they hid them from the Turks. One significant evidence of the British occupation is afforded by the condition of the streets. In the new city they were quite passable, but in the old they were renowned for their filthy and unsanitary condition. To-day the old city is cleaner than it has ever been.

"Writing of the condition of Jerusalem prompts one to point out that it is a thousand pities that, when the Turks authorized the inhabitants to build without the city walls, they did not insist on the maintenance of a clear space between the new and the old cities. Jerusalem is perhaps one of the most perfect examples extant of a walled city of mediæval times, but at present its character is quite lost, owing to the fact that in places the new city is built right up to the old walls, and that in others huge mounds, the débris of centuries, link the picturesque old Jerusalem with its very modern suburbs. It is only on the east, southeast and northeast sides that the walls lead on to the greensward, which, to give the Holy Land its distinctive character as the shrine of three religions, ought to run right round it.

"The effect of the era of justice and peace which has been inaugurated by the British is apparent not only on the faces of the people, who appear carefree and as if they had awakened from a terrible nightmare, but also in their general behavior and their attitude toward the new régime. Complete confidence reigns between the people of every community and the British administration, as is evident from the manner in which the former look to the latter for support and assistance in their difficulties and the readiness with which, without any display of force, they do the behest of the authorities. The whole of the population of Palestine is indeed wholeheartedly pro-British. This is equally true of all communities, which have openly welcomed the British occupation as a release from the Turkish bondage under which they have suffered.

"The cost of its administration and of the regeneration of the country is at present being financed from army funds. No funds were available when we entered Palestine—the Turks had emptied all the coffers—no taxes have so far been collected from the people, and everything that has been taken has been paid for in hard cash—somewhat of a contrast to the practice of the Germans in occupied enemy territory!

"Even as regards the funds devoted to religious or benevolent purposes, the proceedings of the Turkish government do not appear to have been above reproach. The income of the Palestine Wakfs (religious and benevolent endowments) amounted to some £16,000 to £17,000 a year; and there were few years in which some thousands of pounds of this revenue failed to find their way to Constantinople for uses which can only be guessed at, as the expenditure does not appear in the accounts, but which may safely be presumed to have been other than pious. Moreover, when the occupation took place, and the treasuries were emptied by the retreating Turk, the Wakf cash balances were involved in the common lot, with the result that the funds necessary for the upkeep, maintenance and repair of these institutions have had to be provided, at any rate as a temporary measure, by the British government. But the Turks went still further, and on the order of the Turkish Sheikh Ul Islam the moneys held in chancery for the education and keep of certain orphans were sent to Constantinople just before the evacuation of Jerusalem."

Goethe: Anti-Prussian

GOETHE was anti-Prussian and felt himself to be such, according to Edith Franklin Wyatt, writing in "The North American Review" of this month. Referring to his first visit to Berlin, she writes: "He is charmed by Berlin's external splendor, but not by her court, which he attends with his patron, Karl August, the Duke of Weimar, nor with that court's intrigues and sycophancies. 'This much I can say,' he observes of it with disaffection, 'the greater the world, the pastier the farce.'"

Goethe took a deep interest in world letters, but his "love for the light of the globe" was destined to receive a crushing blow from Prussia.

"The avatar of this passion was his beloved 'Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung,' published under the liberal auspices of the University of Jena. . . .

"Early in the nineteenth century, Prussia, alarmed undoubtedly by the French sympathies and radical tendencies of the great eclectic periodical, purchased it for what was then a fabulous price, and removed it to Halle, and to a future less eclectic. To-day, a hundred years afterward, we can honor Goethe's nervous breakdown at this Prussian conquest, and sympathize with what his biographers call his 'abnormal irritability,' for months after it, with everybody, even his dearest friends.

* * *

"His letters to Carlyle, his correspondence with Sir Walter Scott, his remarks on Coleridge's translation of 'Wallenstein,' his interest, as in some hallowed rite, in Carlyle's entrance as an honorary member in the Berlin Society for Foreign Literature, a hundred appreciations of writers of English throughout Goethe's life, tell us that his feeling for cosmopolitan letters, for international sympathies, was one of the deepest emotions of his existence. His speech on the topic has the eloquence, has also the trepidation, of a lover."

When Prussia and the Allies of 1813 were driving Napoleon out of Germany Goethe exclaimed to a friend:

"What has been gained? They say 'liberty'; but perhaps we should call it 'liberation'—namely, liberation from one foreign yoke, not from the yoke of foreigners. It is true that I no longer see Frenchmen; but I see, instead, Cossacks, Magyars, brown and other Hussars."